

Corps Connection

ALABAMA
citizen★corps

A Monthly Publication for Alabama Citizen Corps Councils, their Partners and Affiliates

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Alabama Citizen Corps is a program of the Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.

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BE READY DAY

SEPTEMBER 2006—US SPACE AND ROCKET CENTER

Young and old, urban and rural—everyone needs to be prepared for a possible disaster. Knowing the risks of your area and being informed about the best response to them, creating a plan, and getting a three-day supply kit together are all critical steps that ensure one is *ready* for the next emergency.

Being *ready* for an emergency was the theme of this year's National Preparedness Month in Alabama. The Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (GFBCI), Alabama's Department of Homeland Security (ADHS), and local Emergency

Management partners collaborated to hold *Be Ready Day*—an interactive, state-wide event to help Alabama's citizens become prepared for any type of disaster. *Be Ready Day*, held on Thursday, September 14th at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville, hosted a crowd of over 3,000 visitors. The event brought together Alabama's professional responders, community organizations, and faith-based groups.



Girl Scouts pack a 3-Day Kit.

From Hazardous Materials (HAZ-MAT) and the Bomb Squad, to Search and Rescue dog teams and Amateur Radio Operators, all Madison County disaster relief stakeholders came to display their equipment, demonstrate their response capabilities, educate the public on their role, and offer tips of advice and information. In addition to these professional responders, groups such as the Girl Scouts of Huntsville, Alabama Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (ALVOAD), and Citizen Corps programs distributed information and encouraged community participation by offering volunteer opportunities and disaster relief training.



Governor Riley and the Huntsville Fire Department



Monrovia Rescue demonstration.

With over 40 exhibits to visit, attendees had the opportunity to receive free disaster supplies and information from agencies and organizations around the state.

Be Ready Day culminated with remarks by Governor Riley. Governor Riley spoke on the importance of preparing one's family and community for an emergency. He also marked the inaugural session of Alabama's *Be Ready Camp* for kids, a four-day education program for 80 sixth graders from Madison County schools, by presenting each student with a Certificate of Completion.



Another round of Jumbo Memory.

We wish to thank all the national, state, and local agencies, community groups, and faith-based organizations for their participation in *Be Ready Day*. Each of these associations took time out of their busy schedules to help our communities become better prepared. Professional responders provide necessary services, but we hope that all Alabamians will realize their own potential by being *informed*, being *involved*, and being *ready*.

From there, we can all take a step to make Alabama safer, stronger, and more prepared for the next disaster.



Governor Riley meets *Be Ready Camp* participants.

Be Ready Camp



Water rescue at *Be Ready Camp*.

If children are the wave of the future, then the 80 sixth graders involved in *Be Ready Camp* promise a society of preparedness for the future of Alabama. From September 11th-14th, 80 students from four Madison County schools participated in *Be Ready Camp*, learning how to prepare and respond to natural and manmade disasters. These sixth-graders spent four days and three nights at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center, training in

fire safety, water survival skills, light search and rescue, and a variety of other classes, activities, and lectures. The camp culminated Wednesday night with a mock disaster where all campers, in full Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) gear, helped coordinate, respond, evacuate, and treat victims of a mock plane crash at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center. Local Emergency Management units assisted in the response (read more on the next page).



Our new CERT gloves!!!



Real fire, real extinguisher, really prepared!

Sponsored by the Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (GFBCI) and the Alabama Department of Homeland Security (ADHS), *Be Ready Camp* was the first of its kind in Alabama. Each camper graduated with a certificate, presented by Governor Riley at *Be Ready Day* on September 14th.

Great job, campers...

Remember to pass all your new skills on!

The *Mock* Disaster at Be Ready Camp

A Simulation that Mirrors Real Life

Mid-flight, a plane crashes into a helicopter. The helicopter pilot lies motionless in a lake, her helicopter in ruins on the shore, while two of her passengers—one thrown from the aircraft, the other still inside and hysterical—shriek for help. On the lakeshore's north end, the plane's pilots lie strapped inside—one unconscious, one disoriented—while the flames from the fiery collision lap at the plane's tail. A missile from the helicopter, sent spiraling into a nearby building by an accidental release during the crash, renders those in the building hurt, trapped, and in need of immediate assistance.

Luckily, this frightening scene was only a simulation at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center. However, that didn't take away from the fact that all the stops were pulled out to make it as real as possible—complete with pyrotechnics, fire, smoke, and dozens of victims covered with simulated lacerations and blood. The mock disaster was the culminating event of *Be Ready Camp*, an engaging four day disaster preparedness camp for 80 Madison County sixth-graders.



Attending shock victims...



And rescuing the pilot.

The disaster simulation allowed these schoolchildren to use their newfound skills from *Be Ready Camp* to locate, rescue, and medically treat the victims. After the children initially responded to the incident, first responders showed up at the scene to whisk away victims by ambulance or Huntsville MedFlight. The simulation was closely monitored to ensure no real injuries occurred, and the children were able to extinguish fires, search smoky buildings, lift and carry victims on stretchers, participate in water rescues, radio for help, and give basic medical care. It was an exciting night where the teams received an earned applause by the end from everyone involved: victims, response units, and the U.S. Space and Rocket Center team... Job well done!

BE READY SUNDAY

Alabama hosted the first annual *Be Ready Sunday* on Sunday, September 24th calling all faith-based organizations to address their congregations on the importance of preparedness. As part of Alabama's National Preparedness Month, religious leaders across the state committed a portion of their congregational address to remind all families to make preparedness a priority in their home. A *Be Ready Sunday* website, established by the Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (GFBCI) provided numerous resources such as talking points, flyers, bulletins, check-lists, and a sample disaster plan to encourage involvement. Local Citizen Corps councils distributed these materials in a massive outreach campaign. Morgan County contacted hundreds of churches and distributed more than 6,000 inserts for church bulletins. Both the local newspaper in Cullman County as well as the local Baptist Association promoted *Be Ready Sunday*. In Tuscaloosa County, the morning television show, *Great Day Tuscaloosa*, promoted *Be Ready Sunday* both on screen and with distributed materials. Also, approximately 100 congregations in Dallas County and the City of Selma received information regarding *Be Ready Sunday*, with the help of the Selma chapters of the Baptist Association, the local VOAD, United Way, and the Black Belt Chapter of the American Red Cross. Thanks so much to all the participating councils and organizations for making the great state of Alabama better prepared and a big *thank you* to all of our faith-based and community partners for sharing your success stories with us!

Helena City Explorers—Leading the Nation

Not that this group of young men and women need any introduction, as we've covered them before for their impressive accomplishments, but the Helena City Explorers of the Helena City Police Department made Alabama famous recently. Because of this, they've earned yet another VIPS spotlight for their hard work, dedication, and visible success. This last July, the team competed in the National Law Enforcement Explorer Competition in Flagstaff, Arizona, ultimately winning first place as the number one national law enforcement explorer post! Furthermore,



#1 Explorers Team in the Country — Helena City, AL

Sergeant Mike Jones, of the Helena City Police Department, was named National Advisor of the year and Chief Explorer

Cory Jackson was elected as the National Youth Representative. Members of the team, including Chief Cory Jackson, Captain Michael Nelson, and Advisor Sergeant Jones manned a booth at Be Ready Day last week in Huntsville, engaging children, parents, and school teachers on the importance of preparedness while handing out fingerprinting ID kits. Thanks again and always for making Alabama so proud. And congratulations on your impressive win!!!



Explorers Chief Cory Jackson

SAVE THE DATE



2006 Annual Conference

***Citizen Preparedness:
Building Resistant and Resilient Communities***

**December 13 & 14, 2006
Grand Hotel Marriott Resort
Point Clear, Alabama**

**For more information, please visit our website at:
www.ServeAlabama.gov**



A Great Year and Good Luck!!!

The fall of 2005 brought drastic changes and transitions for so many across the gulf coast states and beyond. Here at the GFBCI, five AmeriCorps Volunteers In Service To America (VISTA) members descended from Oregon to New York in an attempt to contribute energy, experience, and hope to the long-term recovery efforts facing the great state of Alabama after Hurricane Katrina. The diversity of their projects included homelessness and evacuees, volunteer and donations management, disaster preparedness and response, and coordinating disaster faith-based initiatives across the state. Now, as their year comes to an end, it is time to say a sincere *thank you* and bid a gracious *goodbye* to this eclectic, endearing, and most importantly, committed group of volunteers. Tim, Ivonne, Annie, Louisa, and Megan, your invaluable time and lasting presence stands as an inspiring example of *humanitarian service*. Thank you, each of you. And every blessing as you go forth from here.



VISTA of the Month— Ruth Smith

My name is Ruth Smith and I am from Alexandria, Virginia. I recently graduated from Colorado College with a degree in English and a minor in Film Studies. I joined the AmeriCorps* VISTA program to not only give back to the community but also to learn about Disaster Management and Emergency Response. While serving for the Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives in Montgomery, Alabama, I will be involved with the Disaster Management and Emergency Response Team as well as working on the Citizen Corps Programs and Council. I look forward to this coming year and all of the exciting opportunities and challenges it will bring.



Upcoming Events



Community Awareness Day

On October 4th, 2006, Jefferson County EMA will promote Citizen Preparedness through the Community Awareness Day. This annual event provides the latest disaster preparedness information to citizens, enlisting all four local television networks as well as the National Weather Service to promote weather safety and awareness. Vendor booths and displays will provide information, prizes, and giveaway items to those that attend. Information for home, business, and school preparedness will be distributed at this event.

Location: 700 block of 20th Street North at Linn Park
Birmingham, AL 35203

ARRL Simulated Emergency Test

As a part of National Preparedness Month and partnering with the Department of Homeland Security, the Amateur Radio Emergency Service will test their emergency operation skills and radio equipment in simulated emergency exercises on the weekend of October 7th - 8th. All emergency coordinators are encouraged to participate. To learn more, visit: www.arrl.org/FandES/field/setguide.html.

Fire Prevention Tips

The National Volunteer Fire Council and Fire Corps will email a fire prevention tip to their listserves every day during Fire Prevention Week, October 8th - 14th, including one tip about how to get involved with Fire Corps. Log onto www.FireCorps.org to join their list.

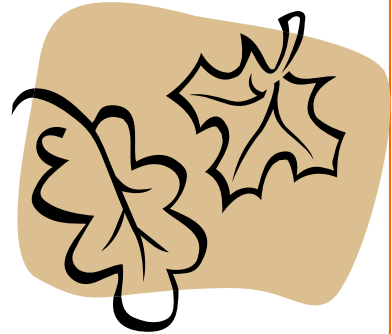
You know you have news!

The Alabama Citizen Corps Council is looking for articles, pictures, updates, lessons-learned, tips, useful websites and events for this monthly newsletter — the more we communicate, the more effective we will be across the state! So please send any information on your local Citizen Corps Councils, your umbrella initiatives, or related information so that the greater councils of Alabama can benefit. Submissions are due by the 15th of each month to be published in the following month's newsletter, space permitting.

October's Tip of the Month!

Warming up for the Holidays

- ◆ Make sure you cut a small incision on top of your Jack-O-Lantern for candle ventilation, or use a battery powered light. If you use a candle, remember to blow it out at the end of the night.
- ◆ When raking leaves this Fall, be sure to check your county's rules and regulations for the proper disposal of dead leaves and sticks. Some counties allow burning on personal property, while others will pick them up on designated days if you leave them bagged on the sidewalk.
- ◆ Thanksgiving is a time for family, friends, food, and football! Unfortunately, all the delicious holiday cooking also means there's a great potential for house fires. Cooking is the leading cause of residential structure fires on Thanksgiving Day (42%), nearly double that of a normal day! Be sure to keep an eye on the oven while watching Macy's parade or the football game!



Get involved with...

Make a Difference Day

Saturday, October 28th, 2006: The National Day of Doing Good!

It's the perfect opportunity to get out on a beautiful fall day and share the spirit of service with your friends, family, or co-workers. For project ideas and more information, visit:

<http://usaweekend.com/diffday/index.html>

Send us your feedback...

Suggestions, topics, questions, or ideas — we want it all!

Please send your contribution to Ruth Smith at ruth.smith@ServeAlabama.gov